



IMPROVING MOBILITY TO AND AROUND SEATTLE'S CENTER CITY

The **Seattle Department of Transportation's** (SDOT) underlying philosophy is to make the best use of downtown streets. We envision a future of moving more people on transportation modes such as bus, light rail, monorail, ferries, streetcars and bicycle and pedestrian pathways creating less reliance on the automobile. Maximizing transit and freight options into and around Seattle's downtown to accommodate projected growth is crucial to the region's economy.

We are developing strategies that take full advantage of our downtown streets, prepare the City and the region for the construction of major projects and offer help in case of an emergency. Strategies focus on access to and around Seattle's Center City a collection of unique, but connected, neighborhoods. These include: Uptown, South Lake Union, Denny Triangle, Belltown, Pike and Pine, the Commercial Core, First Hill, Capitol Hill, Pioneer Square and the Chinatown/International District.

SDOT wants to make sure the Center City continues to thrive.

WHAT SDOT IS DOING

First, SDOT developed a conceptual framework for maximizing access within the Center City by improving and integrating public transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks. This information is contained in the City Center Circulation Report (found at www.seattle.gov/transportation/ppmpcentercity.htm), which is the stepping stone for our development of the City Center Access Strategy. The City Center Access Strategy used the framework to identify over 20 different projects to keep Seattle moving.

THEMES

The following themes guided project recommendations in the City Center Access Strategy:

1. An easy to use integrated transit network of light rail, monorail, commuter rail, street car, ferry and bus service.
 - Identify opportunities and gaps between existing transportation systems and possibilities to better connect transit, bicyclists and pedestrians.
 2. Transportation improvements that accommodate projected growth downtown and meet the City's Comprehensive Plan goals.
 - Without reliable, efficient alternatives to driving, downtown will need to construct approximately 10 parking garages 12 stories high to meet the demand of new auto trips. Seattle cannot accommodate projected growth unless we give people options to being stuck in traffic.
 3. Maximize existing investments to create a superior transportation system.
 - Break through known traffic choke points to downtown to improve transit access for more frequent and reliable service and prioritize freight movement to maintain the region's economic vitality.
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PROJECTS

SDOT looked at what's underway, what's under consideration and identified new ideas. We are studying over 20 projects to improve the roadway network for transit and freight. The following information summarizes opportunities:

- Low cost **demand management strategies** such as incentives for people to try other options than driving alone.
- **Advanced technology** including signal upgrades for transit priority and variable message signs to inform trucks of incidents.
- **Connect existing and future transit:**
 - **Link Light Rail** (currently under construction with options to continue north being refined)
 - **Sounder** commuter rail
 - **Monorail** (in design phase)
 - A **streetcar network** that is viable transit option and not just a tourist attraction.
 - A **bus system** that is simple to understand and use.
 - Design and manage **Third Avenue as the place you come to catch the bus or train** in the transit tunnel or on the surface street.
 - Support existing **ferries**, new operators providing fast service, and transit connections for walk-on passengers.
- **Multi-Modal Hubs:** Three multi-modal hubs at King Station, Westlake and Colman Dock will become places people seamlessly connect to other transportation systems.

- **Bicycle facilities** such as adding bicycle lanes so more people feel safe and comfortable biking in the Center City.
- Key **pedestrian linkages** to facilitate walking between densely traveled areas.
- Create a **two-way Mercer Boulevard** with better street connections, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
- Add a **ramp from Spokane Street Viaduct to Fourth Avenue** providing more connections for transit and freight to downtown roads.
- Implement **new connections between Airport Way and King Street** to provide better southern transit and freight access into downtown.
- Improve the efficiency of entering and exiting **I-5 & SR-99** providing important access around Center City.

OTHER REALATED STUDIES

The Washington State Department of Transportation and SDOT recently completed two reports focused on the Alaska Way Viaduct. One report studies how to keep downtown access open and people, transit and freight moving during construction of a new viaduct and seawall. The second report takes a look at the concept of not replacing the viaduct *in combination with* projected growth for the year 2030. These two reports will help guide SDOT efforts to find creative transportation solutions both during construction, in case of an emergency, and in meeting growth projections. For more information on the two Viaduct studies, please visit: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct/library.htm.

NEXT STEPS

SDOT is giving presentations and asking for **feedback on how we can make the projects mentioned in the Strategy better**. Once the most effective projects are agreed upon, we will do further design, and then seek funding for final design and implementation.

Visit: www.cityofseattle.net/transportation/centercityaccess.htm, or contact Dawn Schellenberg, Public Relations Supervisor, at Dawn.Schellenberg@Seattle.gov or call 206.684.5189 for more information